

**NATIONAL
COALITION
AGAINST
CENSORSHIP** **KIDS'
RIGHT
TO READ**

December 6, 2023

School Board
Hanover County Public Schools
200 Berkley Street
Ashland, VA 23005

Dear Members,

The National Coalition Against Censorship is an alliance of national nonprofit groups dedicated to protecting freedom of expression, including the rights of K-12 students, teachers, and staff. We are writing in response to media reports that district administration has ordered 75 books be removed from school libraries. We are concerned that the administration has failed to follow district regulations regarding the deselection of library materials.

It is our understanding that these books were identified for deselection based on a rubric provided by the district, which simply asked school staff to evaluate if the books included sexually explicit content. However, Board Policy 6-5.2 states that "materials may be removed if they are determined not to be age appropriate for the intended audience due to sexually explicit content or pervasive vulgarity." Therefore, the rubric should have asked whether the books were age appropriate. Thus, by using a rubric which asked only whether the books included sexually explicit content, the administration seems to have violated district policy.

Therefore, we urge you to rescind the order to remove the books and to require the administration to evaluate them using the proper criteria.

Please let us know if you have any questions or need any further support.

Thank you for your attention and consideration to this matter.

Sincerely,



Christine Emeran
Youth Free Expression Program Director
National Coalition Against Censorship

Co-signed by: American Booksellers for Free Expression
The Authors Guild
Children's and Young Adult Books Committee, PEN America
Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators

A project of the National
Coalition Against Censorship

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